

the very spot where this organization first got its start. Undoubtedly, this marker represents the VFW's wonderful tradition of service to our community in central Ohio and to our great Nation.

□ 1015

#### MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE

(Mr. ALLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALLEN. Madam Speaker, after fighting tooth and nail against Democratic efforts to provide seniors with prescription drug coverage, the Republican leadership now appears willing to make a small concession. They will agree to let pharmacies buy drugs from Canada for sale to U.S. citizens. This is the bipartisan crumb that may be given to seniors by the 106th Congress.

The Republican leadership believes that if they govern as Republicans for 22 months, they can win elections by talking like Democrats for the last 2.

Governor Bush barely mentioned the words "prescription drugs" during the primary season. Now he says he has a plan, but it will not help middle-income seniors with huge drug bills. He says that Medicare is a government HMO. It is not. It is reliable. Medicare does not pick up and leave a State if it is not making money.

It is cost effective. Medicare has 3 percent administrative costs instead of 30 percent for the private insurance companies. It is fair. Medicare covers all seniors, not just a few.

A Medicare prescription drug benefit with negotiated lower prices for all seniors, that is the Democratic promise.

#### NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR AUTISM RESEARCH SPONSORS "WALK FAR"

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, autism strikes one out of every 500 children. In Florida, 50 percent of all children and adults afflicted with autism reside within my congressional district. I have become very familiar with this disorder because my close friend, Patience Flick, has two children, Bonnie and Willis, with autism.

On November 4, we will be participating in Walk FAR, Friends and Relatives, sponsored by the National Alliance for Autism Research. This first walk of its kind is being organized by the cochairs, Michelle Cruz and Marie Eileen Whitehurst, two south Florida mothers whose children have autism.

South Florida will come together that Saturday to raise research funds

for the National Alliance for Autism Research, which in only 4 years has committed \$3 million for 50 specific projects and fellowships around the world to combat this devastating disorder.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Michelle and Marie Eileen, as well as Karen London, founder of the National Alliance for Autism Research, Dr. Michael Alessandri, director of the University of Miami Center for Autism and Related Disorders, and the hundreds of south Florida families who will join forces to begin the eradication of autism.

#### SENIORS MUST HAVE MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, today, once again, America awoke to the story of another senior citizen that finds the difficult choices in their life because of the cost of prescription drugs.

Winifred Skinner, 79 years old, of Des Moines, Iowa, yesterday told the Vice President how on her \$800-a-month income, \$250 will go to prescription drugs, which leaves her very little for her other costs of maintaining her household. Therefore, she spends 2 and 3 hours a day collecting aluminum cans to turn in to provide food for herself. She is reduced to walking the streets and the roads of Des Moines, Iowa, so that she can collect cans to provide food because of the high cost of prescription drugs. She has no prescription drug benefit.

Madam Speaker, we have been trying now for almost 2 years to get the Republicans to agree to have a Medicare prescription drug benefit so people like Winifred Skinner will have a reliable benefit to help pay for the medicines that they need; not a plan that depends on whether or not their HMO is in business or out of business; not a plan that depends on whether or not an insurance company will write the benefit or not, but a guaranteed plan within the Medicare system so that seniors know that they can rely on it.

The time has come so Winifred Skinner does not have to keep walking the roads.

#### MEDIA WATCHDOG ORGANIZATION NEEDED

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, since Labor Day, the traditional start of presidential campaigns, ABC, CBS and NBC evening newscasts have given AL GORE 55 percent positive cov-

erage and George Bush only 35 percent. The networks, which are the primary source of information for most Americans, did not cover several possible scandals involving the Gore campaign.

Sometimes I wonder if they are trying to control our political process. The media do not have a license to lie or mislead or slant or skew the news. We should hold biased members of media accountable and encourage them to be fair, impartial, and balanced.

One way is to form a citizen's watchdog organization. If the media will not police themselves, and if we cannot allow the government to intervene, then it is up to us to take the initiative.

Good government and fair media coverage demands that we take such an action.

#### OIL AND FUEL PRICES

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Madam Speaker, gasoline is going up to \$2 a gallon. Home heating oil fuel is going up 50 percent. Diesel fuel is so high we will get a nosebleed.

Beam me up.

We do not need to open up emergency oil reserves. That helps oil companies and monarchs who can continue to gouge. It is time for Congress to slap huge fines on those companies that gouge the American consumer.

But, finally, it is also time to tell those monarchs and dictators from the OPEC countries the next time Saddam Hussein comes calling, dial 911 for the Boy Scouts, because they are on their own. I guarantee in 30 days this thing will be resolved.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the fact that America is being gouged as much by American companies as they are by these monarchs and dictators overseas.

#### TAXPAYERS' CHOICE DEBT REDUCTION ACT

(Mr. SANFORD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SANFORD. Madam Speaker, Eisenhower apparently once said that he believed that there could be no surplus as long as our Nation was in debt. I come from that school of thought, and yet that is not exactly where we are right now in Washington.

Where we are right now is debating whether or not 90 percent or 50 percent, or some number in between, of these projected future surpluses should be allocated to the debt.

What struck our office is the fact that really more than just the Congress should be involved in that debate. It is for that reason that I introduce today the Taxpayers' Choice Debt Reduction Act.